

SYLLABUS
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL POLICY AND PRACTICE
DOCTORATE IN CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK
Dissertation Workshop Fall 2021-2022

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A dissertation is an independent work of scholarship that explores a topic of expertise in depth. Ideally, it can be disseminated in the academic literature in order to advance the body of knowledge in a given area. This workshop is designed to consider each aspect of a dissertation proposal. Students are provided with feedback from the workshop facilitator, as well as peer study group members at each stage of proposal development. At the conclusion of the workshop, it is anticipated that each student will have a rough draft of their dissertation proposal to utilize in beginning work with their dissertation chair.

The cohort will meet together as a group with their facilitator via Zoom in September, November, January, and May. You will work individually and in peer groups to develop, at the least, a literature review and a detailed outline of the methodology at the end of the workshop. After revising this product based on peer feedback, students will individually provide it to the facilitator via email and then schedule an individual meeting to obtain feedback and to discuss possible dissertation matches. A match will then hopefully be made as soon as possible after that but no later than the end of the spring semester. Some chairs do reach their maximum capacity for students rather quickly; therefore, if you have a certain person in mind, you might want to have your preliminary project ready and schedule your individual meeting earlier rather than later in the semester.

Meeting: September 2: Introduction, overview, and possible dissertation approaches, break into groups of 4-ish based on interest areas that will give each other peer feedback in second semester.

Meeting: November 23: Writing the literature review, the role of systematic reviews

- A systematic review aims to comprehensively locate and synthesize all research on a particular topic, using an established protocol of organized, transparent, and replicable procedures with some method of synthesis of either the quantitative (ideally meta-analysis) or qualitative (meta-synthesis) research.

- A scoping review is similar to a systematic review in aim and process but is used to determine the state of the research for a nascent topic.

Due: By end of semester in December, each student provides facilitator with a summary of at least one published systematic review on your topic and a paragraph on how it will inform your review via email. Feedback will be delivered a week after it is provided.

Due: January 6: Provide peer group members with a draft of the literature review or a detailed outline with recent sources (10-15).

Preparatory work for January 13. Peruse a few of the following journals: *Clinical Case Studies, Clinical Social Work Journal, Cognitive and Behavior Practice, Pragmatic Case Studies in Psychotherapy, Psychoanalytic Social Work, Clinical Social Work Journal, Smith College Studies in Social Work, Psychoanalytic Dialogues, Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*

Which one would you consider submitting to? Why? What topic would you write on?

Due: Feedback to group members on literature review

Session 4: January 13: Case studies, methodology section of proposal

- Through the use of multiple sources of data and an evidence-based empirical approach, the case study provides “an in-depth description, exploration, or explanation of a particular system or phenomenon through quantitative and/or qualitative methods data collection and analysis. The case study aims to generate or test a theory in its particular social, cultural, and historical context” (Lee, Mishna, & Brennenstuhl, 2010. p. 682).
- Medical narrative: A creative non-fiction approach to the case study as an illustration of a particular social phenomenon.

Due: February 1: Detailed outline of research question/hypotheses and methodology section to small group members.

Due: February 15: Turn in feedback for group members

Due: End of Feb to end of April: Literature review and Methodology to facilitator, then schedule individual meeting (30-40 minutes) to discuss possible chairs.

Session 5, May 24

· Presentation by IRB staff